

St. Barnabas Church
Leeland, Md.

Prince Georges Co.

HABS No. 128

HABS

MD.

M. LEID

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Washington, D.C.

Historic American Buildings Survey
1707 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D.C.
Delos H. Smith, District Officer

111

Addendum To:
ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEEELAND
14705 Oak Grove Road
Leeland
Prince Georges County
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-128

HABS
MD
17-LELD,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS
MD
17-LELD
1-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)

HABS NO. MD-128

Location: 14705 Oak Grove Road, Upper Marlboro (Leeland vicinity), Prince George's County, Maryland

Present Owner: Vestry of Queen Anne Parish, c/o Rev. Lawrence Harris, 14111 Oak Grove Road, Upper Marlboro.

Present Use: Church (with school on grounds)

Significance: St. Barnabus is one of six extant Colonial-era churches in Prince George's County, and one of only two executed in the Colonial, Georgian style. This, Queen Anne's, Parish is also among the oldest parishes in the county, having been established by an act of assembly in 1704. Due to its long and active associations with some of the county's most prominent families, St. Barnabus exemplifies the social, religious and historical heritage of the county and state. The current church was constructed in 1774 to replace the second church on this site. In the 1850s, it was renovated and remodelled, with Victorian detailing added. It was eventually restored to its original appearance in 1974.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The church was completed in 1774. An inscribed brick at the first story of the east rear reads "AD July 3, 1774."

2. Builder, contractor: The vestry minutes for St. Barnabus include a contract between the Rector at that time, Jonathan Boucher, and Christopher Lowndes, to build "a new brick church where the old Brick Church now stands." Lowndes was a contractor/builder from Bladensburg, where he had his own shipyard and merchant house. He imported, among other things, building supplies.

3. Original plans and construction: The builder's contract in the vestry records gives the specifications for the construction of the new brick church. The new church was to be "60 feet in length and 46 feet in

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 2)

width," with "side walls 20 feet high above the surface of the ground." The walls were to be 27" thick at the foundation, 22" thick at 2' above the foundation, and 18" at the top of the wall. The long sides of the church were to have two rows of windows, four windows in each row, with the first-story windows having twenty-four lights and the second eighteen. The ends of the church were to have "two large neat ten panelled folding doors... and a window between them to contain 24 lights each," and three eighteen-light windows on the second story. There was to be a gallery at the west end of the church, and the roof was to be covered in cypress shingles. The work was to be completed "in a workmanlike manner" by the end of August 1774.

4. Alterations and additions: The church was renovated and "Victorianized" in the 1850s, under the rectorship of J.A. McKenney. According to an article appearing in the *Planter's Advocate* on December 26, 1855, "A description of the recent improvements by which the old church edifice has been so much adorned...." Although the original brick walls were disturbed "but little", and "as much of the ancient character as possible has been retained,... the whole of the outside has been painted somewhat the color of brown stone. The interior has been altered considerably for the better while, as on the outside, the effort has been to preserve its antique character. The ceiling has been lowered, and with the walls and pews, grained in the imitation of oak. The chancel rail and furniture are of walnut. A part of the old building has been converted into a commodious robing-room, such as not often fall to the lot of a country church." It was also during this period that they began substituting the original Colonial clear-glass lights for stained-glass lights.

Many of these Victorian-era changes were later reversed, however, in 1971 when efforts to restore it to its original Colonial appearance began. The restoration was undertaken under the direction of M. Walter Macomber, then resident architect for Colonial Williamsburg. During the restoration, the stained-glass windows were removed and placed in the adjoining chapel that was then constructed. Windows in the original style were reconstructed. The Victorian robing room was also removed, and the gallery restored with its stairway rebuilt in its original position. The interior--the pews, pulpit, gallery and brick floors--were all rebuilt, reproducing the original form. The restored church was

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 3)

rededicated in October of 1974.

B. Historical Context:

In May of 1692 Governor Lionel Copley was sent from England to initiate meetings between the Governor's Council and the Maryland Assembly to provide an organizational and financial base for the Church of England in Maryland. The result was the Act of 1692 which established thirty parishes, two of which were formed in what would soon become Prince George's County. These two parishes were St. Paul's and St. John's.

As settlement of the county progressed, shifts in the concentration of population necessitated the establishment of chapels of ease and of new parishes. Thus, Queen Anne Parish was formed from the northern part of St. Paul's parish, by a 1704 Act of Assembly. The first St. Barnabus Church was a small log structure. Then, in 1710, it was replaced with a brick church building. Since it was the first church built of brick in the county, it was often referred to as "the Brick Church." It was later replaced by the current church building in 1774.

The present church was built under the rectorship of one of St. Barnabus's best-known rectors, Jonathan Boucher. Boucher is infamous for his pro-English sermons that so offended the revolutionary patriots among the congregation that Boucher preached at times with loaded pistols for protection (Virta, pg. 68). The vestry minutes record the contract for the construction of the church, between Rector Boucher and Christopher Lowndes. Lowndes was a prominent citizen of Bladensburg, where he operated his own merchant house, importing, among other things, building supplies. He evidently also was a builder/contractor. According to the contract, Lowndes was to build "a new brick church near the place where the old brick church now stands."

The church underwent renovation in the 1850s during the rectorship of J.A. McKenney. At that time, Victorian details were added, including stained-glass windows to replace the original clear-glass lights. A "description of the recent improvements by which the old church edifice has been much adorned" was given by the Planter's Advocate in 1855, "as much of the ancient character as possible has been retained,... the whole of the outside has been painted somewhat the color of brown stone. The

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 4)

interior has been altered considerably for the better while, as on the outside, the effort has been to preserve its antique character..."

Restoration of St. Barnabus Church to its original colonial-era appearance began in 1971 under the direction of architect, M. Walter Macomber. Mr. Macomber was then resident architect for Colonial Williamsburg. During this time, the church was restored and the adjoining Canterbury Chapel was constructed. The restoration included the removal of the Victorian stained-glass (to the Canterbury Chapel) and its replacement with a reproduction of the original colonial lights. The gallery was restored along with its stairway. The restoration was completed and the church rededicated in October of 1974.

As one of only six surviving colonial-era churches in Prince George's County, and one of only two constructed in the Colonial, Georgian style, St. Barnabus reflects the established Anglican church form. Built during the Colonial era, this style was later rejected for a more homogeneous American form. This Anglican or traditional basilica-type church was a long rectangular structure consisting of a nave and side aisles with the entrance at one short end and the sanctuary at the other. Being a more simple, early, rural church (like a meeting house) it has no bell tower or steeple, and a preaching area rather than a sanctuary and/or transepts.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: St. Barnabus Episcopal Church is one of only two surviving churches built in the Colonial, Georgian style in Prince George's County. Its design reflects that of the Anglican or traditional basilica-type church, built during the colonial era but later rejected. St. Barnabus is distinguished by its two-story exterior appearance (two stories of windows), its hip-on-hip roof and its two entries at either end. The church has been restored, with much of the interior finish being a reconstruction.

2. Condition of the fabric: The church is in excellent condition, having been completely restored in 1971-74.

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 5)

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: St. Barnabus is a rectangularly shaped, two-story structure, three-bays-by-four-bays with a single-story chapel wing to one side. The main block measures 46' x 60'.

2. Foundations: The church rests on a brick foundation, laid in Flemish bond.

3. Walls: The walls are brick, laid in Flemish bond, with a molded-brick water table.

4. Structural system, framing: The church is of load-bearing masonry construction.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: There are two doorways (with a window between them) at both the west front and east rear. The doorways are recessed with panelled reveals. Above the doors are wide, flat-arched brick lintels. The doors are double, four-panel doors.

b. Windows: On the first-story the windows are six-over-nine-light-sash, and on the second, they are slightly narrower, four-over-six-light-sash. All have a simple wooden architrave surround--a band with an outer molding and an inner bead. They have molded wooden sills and flat-arched brick lintels.

6. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The roof is a hip-on-hip roof, covered with wood shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: There is a narrow, dentilled wooden cornice, with bed and crown molding.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The floor plan of the old church building is completely open; it is one large room, open to the roof, with exposed cross beams and king-post trusses. To the center is a double row of boxed pews, with a row of boxed pews to either side. The altar is to the center of the front, one step up, with an altar rail around it.

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 6)

There is a pulpit to the northeast corner. Along the west front wall, on the second story, is a gallery.

2. Stairway: The single-flight, open stairway runs along the west rear wall, past the center bay, between the two entries. It has a plain balustrade with a panelled spandrel wall.

3. Flooring: The floors are of brick laid in a herringbone pattern, a replacement of the original which were in the same pattern.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are of plaster. There is a cornice above the second-story windows, demarcating the walls from the interior of the open-roofed ceiling.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The doorways are surrounded by a stepped architrave trim. The double doors are four panel, supported by H and HL hinges, with box locks. There is an open doorway at the north wall, northwest corner which leads from the old church into the chapel addition.

b. Windows: The windows are recessed with stepped architrave trim along the outer edge.

6. Decorative features and trim: There is a gallery along the front wall, supported by squared posts outlined with molding. The railing is formed by a solid panelled wall to the center of which is an oil painting of "The Last Supper" done by the well-known colonial-era painter Gustavus Hesselius, commissioned by Rector Jacob Henderson (1718-1751). The pulpit in the northeast corner is octagonal with a pendant bottom and panelled walls. The pulpit is accessed by a small enclosed stair to the rear. Hanging above it is the sounding board--a pendant-like top. The wall behind the altar has a large panel between the doors, with four pilasters and a window to the center. There is a large, arched broken pediment above. There is a balustrade around the altar with turned balusters. The pews are boxed, with two-paneled walls and doors. There is a free-standing marble baptismal font--supposedly ordered from England by Rector Henderson in 1718--in the corner beneath the gallery.

7. Hardware: There are H and HL hinges and box locks on

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 7)

the doors.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Church Road ends at Oak Grove Road and there on the other side is St. Barnabus church. The church faces west onto the drive. To the east rear is the cemetery. A chapel addition appears to the north side.
2. Historic landscape design: To the rear of the church is an ancient, tree-shaded cemetery which contains the tombstones of many prominent county families such as the Belt, Duckett, Duvall, Bowie, Beall and Magruder families.
3. Outbuildings: To the south of the church is a free-standing brick belfry (1930). To the south and southwest are the modern brick buildings of the Queen Anne School.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early Views: St. Barnabus Church was photographed by Delos H. Smith of HABS, who took one view in 1936, and again on April 20, 1937, by photographer John O. Brostrup who took five more views. Brostrup took two general views from the southwest, one from the west, one of the windows of a side elevation and one detail of the brick work. The church exterior is much the same in these views as it is today with the obvious exception of the stained-glass windows.

B. Bibliography:

Pearl, Susan G. (HPC) Maryland Historical Trust,
State Historic Sites Inventory Form, St. Barnabus
Episcopal Church, prepared September 1987 (source
for original records such as vestry minutes, etc).

Rifkind, Carole. A Field Guide to American
Architecture (New York: A Plume Book, New American
Library, 1980).

Virta, Alan. Prince George's County; A Pictorial
History (Prince George's County: Donning Company
Publishers, 1984).

Wilfong, James C., Jr. "The Original Parishes,"
The Prince George's Post, 30 November 1967.

ST. BARNABUS CHURCH, LEELAND
(St. Barnabus' Episcopal Church)
HABS NO. MD-128 (page 8)

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of St. Barnabus Church was undertaken as part of a cooperative project between the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission on behalf of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to document select sites throughout the county. The site selection was made by Gail Rothrock, director and Susan G. Pearl, research historian of the HPC. They also provided access to their historical research and information on file with the HPC, as well as their extensive knowledge of the county's history. The large format photography was undertaken by HABS photographer Jack E. Boucher. The historical report was prepared by HABS historian Catherine C. Lavoie who also accompanied the photographer into the field for on site investigation.